

For Immediate Release

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Claire West

Phone: 602.229.8231

E-mail: cwest@AzArts.gov

**ARTS COMMISSION RECEIVES FUNDS TO EXPAND ARTIST RESEARCH
FROM ARIZONA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION**

Phoenix, Arizona—The Arizona Commission on the Arts, on behalf of the Arizona Partnership for Innovation, received a \$50,000 grant toward a research project aimed at examining the support systems for artists in the state from the Sybil B. Harrington Trust administered through the Arizona Community Foundation (ACF). The ACF grant will allow the research team to widen its scope in examining what support currently exists on the state level for individual artists.

The Arizona Partnership for Innovation, a consortium of arts and policy leaders, with the Arizona Commission on the Arts as a lead partner, has embarked upon a two-phase research project in collaboration with Creative Capital Foundation, focusing on the professional development and working conditions of artists of all disciplines throughout the state. The overall project will include a research phase and a pilot educational phase.

The first phase assesses support systems for artists—programs, services and networks—and identifies gaps within this infrastructure. A statewide inventory such as this has never been conducted before. The findings will be compiled into a report for the Commission, the Partnership for Innovation, and Creative Capital Foundation. The report will determine how the partners will address opportunities for strengthening support.

The research is motivated by the rapid growth in Arizona. Where facilities and audiences for the arts may be keeping pace, the support for and recognition of the individual artist may be lagging. The result of this, among other things, is the exodus of creative thinkers who are unable to sustain their work in Arizona. The Commission has promoted support for individual artists, recognizing that financial support for artists should be matched with career development. Creative Capital Foundation, Inc., based out of New York, provides financial and educational services to hundreds of creative artists nationwide who excel in their form. Responding to a proposal, Creative Capital partnered with the Commission on the research, funded by the Doris Duke Foundation. The grant from the Community Foundation ensures more in-depth study in phase one. Phase one involves exhaustive interviews and focus groups conducted by an independent team in southern, central and northern Arizona.

In Phase two, a pilot educational aspect takes place late in 2006. A 3-day skills-building retreat is scheduled to teach artists how to move forward aggressively in their career. Creative Capital has produced retreats throughout the country and participants have credited them with catapulting them into the next phase of their careers. Should the pilot prove productive in Arizona, the retreats could be conducted regularly.

An independent evaluator will assess the results of the two phases of the project at their culmination.

The Arizona Community Foundation grant is specifically for research conducted within Maricopa County, and to support Maricopa based artists and activities during the educational phase.

The mission of the **Arizona Community Foundation** (ACF) and its affiliates is to build a legacy of community philanthropy by connecting donor interests with community needs.

Creative Capital Foundation is a national grantmaking organization committed to partnering with individual artists to help them navigate the complex environment in which they work.

The mission of the **Arizona Commission on the Arts** is an Arizona where people broaden, deepen, and diversify their engagement with the arts, as creators, audiences and supporters, in ways that are satisfying and integral to their lives.

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Claire West
Performing Arts Director
Arizona Commission on the Arts
417 W. Roosevelt
Phoenix, AZ 85003-1326
P: 602.229.8231
E: cwest@Azarts.gov